

Little Red Schoolhouse
Eastern States Exposition Grounds
West Springfield
Hampden County
Massachusetts

HABS No. MA-293

HABS
MASS.
7-SPRIFW,
8-

PHOTOGRAPHS

Historic American Buildings Survey
National Park Service
Department of the Interior
Washington, D.C. 20240

LITTLE RED SCHOOLHOUSE
Whatley
Franklin County
Massachusetts

HABS No. MA-293

ADDENDUM TO
LITTLE RED SCHOOLHOUSE
Eastern States Exposition Grounds (moved from Whatley, MA)
West Springfield
Hampden County
Massachusetts

HABS
MASS
7-SPRIFW,
8-

WRITTEN HISTORICAL AND DESCRIPTIVE DATA
REDUCED COPIES OF MEASURED DRAWINGS

HISTORIC AMERICAN BUILDINGS SURVEY
National Park Service
U.S. Department of the Interior
P.O. Box 37127
Washington, DC 20013-7127

HISTORIC AMERICAN BUILDINGS SURVEY

ADDED TO:
LITTLE RED SCHOOLHOUSE

HABS
MASS
7-SPRIFW,
8-

HABS No. MA-293

Location: West Springfield, Hampden County, Massachusetts.

Significance: The simplicity of the schoolhouse plan is juxtaposed against the quality of materials used in its creation. One room schoolhouses typically evoke myths about the quaint lifestyle of the Puritans and pioneers; this example fell prey to such twentieth-century invented memories. It was moved from its site to the grounds of an Eastern States Exposition in 1929-30.

Description: The Little Red Schoolhouse gets its name from its fabric, red brick walls. The schoolhouse is approached by granite steps. It is capped by a slate roof and copper top cupola. The side elevations are pierced by two windows, twelve-over-twelve double hung sash. The front (southeast) facade consists of a tower nine feet wide, punctuated by a entrance door and window at its second floor level, rising to a wood belfry and again to cupola with an octagon base. In the belfry is a bell. The entrance is a six panel door, complete with a fanlight and sidelights. The sidelights are framed by fluted pilasters, four in all. There is a chimney at its northeast end.

Inside, the schoolhouse is a one room plan with a vestibule. Akin to a church, the vestibule acts as a narthex, and the student/communicant moves from the eastern end to the altar or teacher's desk. The vestibule also serves as a coatroom and stairhall. The stairs rise to the second floor of the tower, to a teacher's room entered through a door made of four panels. The stairs continue up to the belfry floor.

History: The town of Whately, Massachusetts, built a one-room schoolhouse around 1810. It was used for five generations of students before it was dismantled and moved to West Springfield, Massachusetts.

Once in the Eastern States Exposition Grounds, the Little Red Schoolhouse became a museum ca. 1929-30. The schoolhouse was positioned on the fairgrounds; then the Exposition erected a New England village around it. The village was based on the town of Vergenna, Vermont. The Exposition planners named their fictitious city, "Storrownon."

John and Salmon White are listed as the architect builders; the bricks are from the Thomas Crafts brickyard in Whately.

Sources: Inventory Form, Massachusetts Historical Commission, 1987.